



# **Request for Proposal**

Sevier County Digital Marketing  
Program Analysis

September 7, 2016

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## SUMMARY

Sevier County is accepting proposals for a research agency to conduct a digital marketing analysis of our current marketing program. The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to provide information to Sevier County to ensure a fair evaluation for completion of this project.

Sevier County is located at the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The county is bordered by the National Park and plays host to 12-15 million visitors annually. Tourism is the main industry for businesses in the county.

The county consists of three major tourism-driven cities - Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg and Sevierville. These individual cities focus their marketing efforts on educating and enticing customers to visit their destination (using the Smoky Mountains as their backdrop), as well as marketing all tourism-related businesses within their respective city limits.

Sevier County owns [www.visitmysmokies.com](http://www.visitmysmokies.com), which is used in a digital marketing program to capture customers in the purchasing funnel that are searching for accommodation products, and to promote and drive traffic and business to the lodging providers outside the city limits (county lodging) that collect and remit the county lodging tax. The website does not book reservations; it gives the user information and directs them to the partners (lodging owners) websites to make reservations. It also gives information on what-to-do in the county so the user can plan their entire vacation. The county has one full-time employee who is in charge of the marketing efforts. Since the inception of the marketing program, an outside agency has been responsible for the creation and operation of the website and digital marketing program. Online marketing is the primary means that the county uses. With a budget of approximately \$1 million, [www.visitmysmokies.com](http://www.visitmysmokies.com), is operated/promoted/reviewed using:

- Search Engine Optimization
- Social Media Marketing
- E-mail Marketing
- SMS
- SEM/PPC
- Print Media
- Smartphone APP
- Reporting and Analytics
- Content Marketing

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- Proposals must be received at the *Sevier County Mayor's Office, Attn: Perrin Anderson, 125 Court Avenue, Suite 103E, Sevierville, TN 37862* by 10 AM Friday, September 23. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. No emailed or faxed proposals will be accepted.
- Proposals must be sealed. The vendor's name, address, proposal due time and date, and the quotation "Digital Marketing Program Analysis Proposal" must be printed on the sealed, opaque envelope containing the proposal.
- Vendor must provide an original proposal and (2) copies of the proposal.
- Proposals must clearly address all questions and requirements as presented in this Request for Proposal. If you wish to submit alternative solutions, you may do so with any deviation from any requirement or specific description clearly noted and explained.
- Proposals must clearly note the price for the base description. If an additional option is described below, any addition or reduction in price as a result of this option must be noted within the proposal.
  - o Price as included must be all-inclusive. Any additional fee or charge must be clearly noted and described.
- Proposals must include an updated Form W-9 for submitting vendor.
- Sevier County reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals for any reason, and to accept the proposal deemed most favorable to the interest of Sevier County

## OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

### ***Objective***

The objective of this Request for Proposal is to obtain a company that through research can measure the effectiveness of the marketing strategies for VisitMySmokies.com. Simply put, are we spending the correct amount of money in the correct places?

### ***Base Description***

The following is a summary of the components and systems needed to meet the above objectives:

- Digital Marketing Program Review (social, video, content, SEO, PPC, retargeting, email growth, partner clicks, costs of acquisition, etc.)
- Given that we are marketing a specific product (cabins, bed and breakfast, and campgrounds) and not marketing a destination, are we getting in front of the right people?
- Are the customers taking the action we want/need them to take?
- Are we getting an acquisition cost that allows us optimal profit?
- How does VMS stack up to the competition and cities with whom we are competing?
- Are our lodging partners seeing more website visitors from VMS?

## QUALIFICATIONS

Vendor shall list their qualifications for completing such work. Qualifications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Examples of other projects completed similar to this RFP
- List of references for completed projects similar to this RFP

## FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following as a guideline to organize your proposal:

- **Title Page:** Your company name, address, website address, and primary contact person and information.
- **Cover Letter:** Introductory letter signed by authorized person to submit proposal
- **Proposal:** Discuss in detail your proposal to our objectives and descriptions for completion of project.
- **Qualifications:** Note your qualifications to complete the proposal.
- **Pricing and Costs:** Provide your total pricing and option pricing for your proposal. Be sure to note any and all fees and charges associated with your proposal.
- **Additional Information:** Include any additional information or attachments as seen relative to the project.

## QUESTIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional questions and clarifications, please contact Angela Atchley, Sevier County Lodging Program Coordinator. Official questions and responses will be in writing via email.

Angela Atchley  
Sevier County Lodging Program Coordinator  
125 Court Ave.  
Suite 103E  
Sevierville, TN 37862  
[aatchley@seviercountyttn.gov](mailto:aatchley@seviercountyttn.gov)  
(865) 774-3786